

## Norway Land Records

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### OBJECTIVE

You will learn:

- How land was used and divided over time
- What land records are available
- What these land records typically contain and when they can be useful
- How to locate land records

### HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION

1536 Protestant Reformation

King of Denmark Norway confiscated all the land belonging to the Catholic Church and it was sold off over the new few centuries, becoming private property.

1600s Several wars take place between Sweden and Denmark Norway. Danish monarchy became absolutist in 1661.

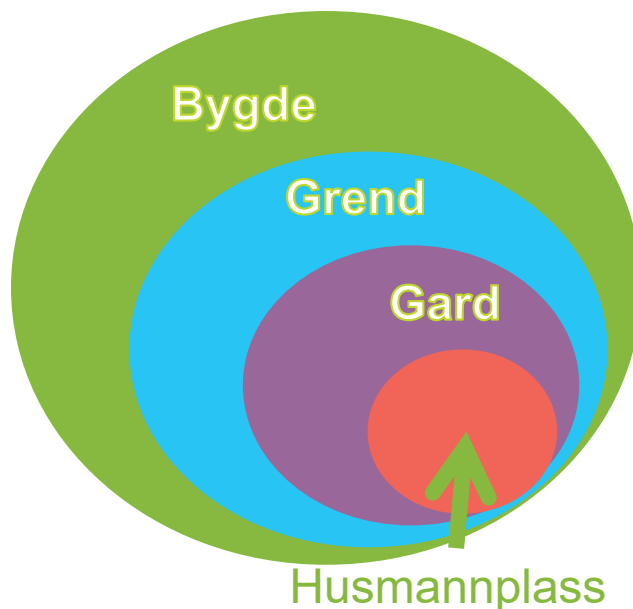
Landowning farmers increased from about 25% to 50% as the crown sold off land to finance the wars lost in the 1600s. Crofts or cotters holdings became much more common at this time.

1500s-1800s – Population increases from 15,000 in 1500 to 900,000 in 1800.

1821 Nobility was abolished, leaving little to no aristocracy and bourgeois.

1832 – more farmers elected into parliament, resulting in rural tax cuts and higher import tariffs

1840s-1860s – Population increases due to better nutrition, lower infant mortality rates, and better understanding of hygiene



## BREAKDOWN OF THE FARM COMMUNITY

**Bygde** – Translates as village, but more generally indicates a geographical area where neighbors may have a natural connection based on location. (May also be referred to as the Sogn (Parish) or the Kommune (municipality))

**Grend** – A section of the bygde where multiple farms for some sort of entity.

**Gard** – The farm unit, owned by a farmer and registered for tax purposes. Land registers have been kept in Norway for centuries.

**Husmannplass** – Cotter's holding. Tenant farmland rented with the agreement to work for the farm owner for a certain amount of time in the year. Cotters typically had a second profession to make ends meet and sometimes had a little bit of airable land that they could farm as a part of their contract.

## FUNCTIONAL PARTS OF A TYPICAL FARM (GARD)

**Tunet** – The farmyard. This is where all the main buildings would be situated. Typically, close to source of clean reliable water. (Located at #1 in image below)

**Innmarka** – The infields. This was the most airable land on the farm, used to grow produce, grasses and hays in rotation. Less airable land in the innmarka was often used for pastureland during the colder months.

**Utmarka** – The outfields. This was typically considered anything that wasn't innmarka. Including Islands, forests, lakes, rivers, marshland, summer pasture, outer hay fields and mountain land. These outfields were more often perceived as common land that could be used for the benefit of all. (Located at #2 and #3 in the image below)

**Seter** – Summer pasture/dairy. These summer farms would be used in the warmer months, allowing an extra support to the farm in winter months. Livestock would be taken into summer farms and these farms would produce dairy products and other goods that could be an extra source of food and support for the farm in the winter months.



## COMMON TYPES OF LAND RECORDS

### ***Deeds – Sjøter***

Land transfer from one person to another.

### ***Pension Contracts – Føderåd***

Agreement of pension paid out by heirs of an estate to their parents. It outlines the transfer of land, the agreement for room, board, and resources available to the pensioner under contract.

### ***Renting or Cottager's Contracts – Hussmannedler, Bygselsbrev, byggeseddelser***

Renting contract. This contract typically outlines the rental rate/work obligation, what resources are available to the renter and the terms for accessing them, as well as the behavior the renters should uphold on the property.

### ***Mortgages – Pantebrever***

A loan extended to someone in order to purchase a property.

### ***Deeds of Gift – Gavebrever***

Like a quitclaim deed, this is a legal agreement to give land to someone without charging them any money.

### ***Deeds of Exchange – Makeskifter***

A contract between two parties in which each party agrees to exchange specific assets.

### ***Bonds – Obligationer***

Obligations or bonds are offered to a potential buyer of land from the seller, binding the seller to convey the land once the buyer gives the agreed price.

## FINDING A FARM NUMBER

### ***Find the Farm Number in the FamilySearch Wiki***

1. Find a vital record for your ancestor – this record will typically list a farm name
2. Go to [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page)
3. In the search bar, type in the name of your parish and click on the drop down option that pops up to go to the wiki page for your parish
4. Scroll down to the section titled "Farm Names"
5. Search through the list to find something like what you're seeing in the record. Spelling may vary but the root of the word should be similar.
6. To the right of the farm name, there is a number. Write down that number for future reference and use.

### ***Find the Farm Number in Oluf Rygh Farm Name Index***

1. Find a vital record for your ancestor – this record will typically list a farm name
2. Go to [https://www.dokpro.uio.no/rygh\\_ng/rygh\\_form.html](https://www.dokpro.uio.no/rygh_ng/rygh_form.html)
3. In the search bar for county, type in the name of your county and click on the county in the dropdown
  - a. Repeat this step with the Parish and Farm
  - b. If you're unsure about the spelling of the farm name, search the parish and look for farms that are similar to what you're seeing in your record.
4. Once you've filled out the county and parish boxes (at least), click "Search"
5. If no hits come up – return to the previous page and refine your search
6. If hits come up – find the farm name that best matches what you see in the record. Write down the number to the left of that farm name for future reference and use.

## **FINDING THE RECORDS USING THE NORWAY NATIONAL ARCHIVES**

### ***Find the Farm or Person in the Land Indexes***

#### **Search the Indexed Land Registers:**

1. Go to <https://media.digitalarkivet.no>
2. Under the box that says "Panteregitre" click on "Eiendomssøk"
3. In the search bar on the right,
  - a. under Fylke, select the county your ancestor was from
  - b. under Kommune, type in the name of the parish your ancestor was from
  - c. under the Eiendomsnavn/Gatenavn, type in the name of the farm your ancestor lived on

Note: you can also search by Gårds-, Bruks-, or Løpe- number. If you know these, you can also add those in to narrow down your search.

4. Click "Søk" to bring up any relevant search results
5. Find a result that you would like to look into further and click on the blue link to open the page for that farm

These records are meant to be an index. They will give abbreviated information for what is happening concerning this land. This will often include the types of transactions happening, the dates, and a reference to where you can find more information in the Land books (Panteboker)

6. Find the book and page information for any contracts or happenings you would like to explore further and write them down.

## **Browse the Land Registers**

1. Go to <https://media.digitalarkivet.no>
2. Under the box that says "Panteregitre" click on "Bla i panteregistre"
3. In the search bar on the right,
  - a. under Fylke, select the county your ancestor was from
  - b. under Kommune, type in the name of the parish your ancestor was from
4. From this list, choose the years and farm numbers you would like to search and click on the link to open the correct book
5. Search through the book to find the information you're looking for. Sometimes this information is organized by farm and farm number, and sometimes it's organized alphabetically by person. Either way, you can search through the book to identify possible records that include your family.
6. Write down the book and page numbers for the Land Books (Panteboker) that include your family.

## ***Find the Original Information in the Land Books (Panteboker)***

7. Use the one of the methods above to find your ancestor and where they may be in the land books and write down the reference information in the land books.
8. Return to <https://media.digitalarkivet.no>
9. Under the box that says "Pantebøker" click on "Bla i pantebøker"
10. In the search bar on the right
  - a. Under "Fylke" select the county
  - b. Under "Kommune" type in the name of the parish
  - c. When the hit list come up, find the book number listed in the index, click on the blue link to open the book.
  - d. Browse through the book to find the correct page number and scan the page for the name of your ancestor.

## ***Find the Original Information in the Court Books (Tingboker)***

1. Use the one of the methods above to find your ancestor and where they may be in the land books and write down the reference information in the land books.
2. Return to <https://media.digitalarkivet.no>
3. Under the box that says "Rettergangsmateriale" click on "Bla i rettergangsmateriale"
4. In the search bar on the right
  - a. Under "Fylke" select the county
  - b. Under "Kommune" type in the name of the parish and click "Søk"
  - c. When the hit list come up, find the book number listed in the index, click on the

blue link to open the book.

- d. Browse through the book to find the correct page number and scan the page for the name of your ancestor.

## **INTERPRETING THE RECORDS**

If help is needed to interpret the records, consider the following resources

### ***Genealogy Word Lists***

Norwegian Genealogical Word List

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Norwegian\\_Genealogical\\_Word\\_List](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Norwegian_Genealogical_Word_List)

Norwegian Dialect Word List

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Norwegian\\_Dialect\\_Word\\_List](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Norwegian_Dialect_Word_List)

Norwegian to English – Modern Legal Terms

<https://www.proz.com/glossary-translations/norwegian-to-english-translations/law-general/page2>

### ***Groups and Forums***

FamilySearch Community

<https://community.familysearch.org/en/group/137-nordic-countries-genealogy-research>

Facebook Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NorwegianGenealogy>

### ***One on One Help***

FamilySearch Online Consultations

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/family-history-library/online-consultations>